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Lord Jesus Christ over the Earth;
AS HELD AND TAUGHT BY THE STUDENTS OF PROPHECY,
IN THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND;
TOGETHER WITH THE
OPINIONS OF THE ANCIENT JEWS,
AND PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS ON THESE SUBJECTS.

IN A LETTER TO A FRIEND.

By OMICRON.

THIRD EDITION, CORRECTED AND ENLARGED.

"Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not, the
Son of Man cometh."—JESUS CHRIST.

LONDON: 1844.

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THE Rev. Joseph Forsyth, lately minister of the Gospel in the Congregational Church at Waterville, C. B., and who was called into the presence of his Lord, at the close of 1866, was "Omicron,"—the writer, five and twenty years ago, of this little work.

It was first published by Nisbet of London, and had considerable circulation in England. The author long desired its re-publication in this country, but never realized that desire, although, as years gathered upon him, it became stronger.

It is as some slight testimony to his memory, and in early posthumous fulfilment of his desire, but still more as testimony to what is believed to be God's truth, that a friend now gives to the press the only copy known to be extant in Canada, that the work may, if the Lord will, have useful circulation here.

It is truth of the character needed by Christians in these times; yet one to some extent goes "outside the camp," and may bear reproach (as the author long ago did) in giving it forth. But if it be according to the mind of the Master, and he accept and own it as testimony, that will be satisfaction enough, and that will be best known in "the day which approacheth."

The author desired a few verbal alterations, and, under the judicious criticism of an esteemed friend (not residing in this country), these have now been made. Furthermore, the author had come to doubt the "day for year" reckoning, and any references to chronology in the following pages are to be read with understanding of his abandonment of it.

The truths here set forth are fitted to comfort and establish Christians, are precious separating from this present evil world in their tendency, and if used in the preaching of the Gospel they would (it is believed) by God's blessing be powerful to the awakening of the unconverted.

Montreal, March, 1867.

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

UNTIL about three years ago, the writer, in common with professing Christians generally, held the opinion that a gradual diffusion of religious knowledge by human instrumentality would renovate our sinful world, and introduce a spiritual millennium. About that time, circumstances led him to a more close study of the prophetic Scriptures than that to which he had formerly been accustomed. By this means a change took place in his views and feelings on this momentous subject. The light broke upon his mind with irresistible force; and, notwithstanding his former prejudices, he could not help seeing that we have no alternative but either to reject the testimony of Scripture, or to admit:—That, the restoration of Israel to their own land and national character; the resurrection of the just and the rapture of the saints then living; the visible appearing of Christ and his return to our earth; and a dreadful tissue of fiery judgments upon corrupt churches and a guilty world will precede the establishment of our Lord's kingdom. Thus brought into a new field of thought, and into an altered state of feeling, he was led to the perusal of the works of the Rev. Messrs. Bickersteth, Brooks, Hooper, Cox, Homes, Sirr, M'Neile, Tyso; of William Cunningham, Esq., Mr. Begg, and others, with pleasure and profit. He is also obliged to acknowledge with grateful feelings, the benefit which he has derived

from the reading of the Tracts on Prophecy, published at No. 1, Warwick Square, London. Next to a diligent study of the Holy Scriptures, he feels it a duty to recommend a careful perusal of these works to his readers. Let it not be said that the subject is trifling, or of secondary importance; on no other subject do the Scriptures speak so frequently; to no other subject do they attach so much importance. The coming, and kingdom, and glory of our Lord, and the necessity of looking for these and of preparing for them, are constantly presented to our attention. These things are the blessed hope of the true Christian, and the terror of the earthly-minded formalist. They present us with a swiftly approaching judgment, and call for diligent preparation.

"Now, only now, against that hour,
We may a place provide."

May it be the happiness of the writer and his readers to meet together, in the blissful and everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.—Amen.

April, 1842.

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THE MILLENNIUM.

I rejoice that there have recently been meetings in the United States, for discussion upon the subject of the expected Millennium; or the coming and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ; and I hope that this call upon us to awake to righteousness will not be disregarded. At the same time I feel some degree of fear, that the *manner* in which our American friends have spoken and written on this subject, may not prove the most judicious; and that it may injure the sacred truth which they desire to propagate. That we are drawing near to the great crisis which shall fulfil the roll of prophecy, is generally admitted by the students of prophecy: but we must not forget that the day and the hour of the coming of the Son of Man are concealed from mortals. It is certainly our business to study the signs of the times, and to labour to understand the chronological prophecies; but these things must be done with fear and trembling, and with much prayer and dependence upon Divine teaching.

The statements of our friends on this subject, in brief, include the following particulars:—

1. The promises made by God to Abraham and his descendants remain to be fulfilled.

2. The prophetic periods of Daniel, and the Revelations, are drawing to a close.

3. That the Jews cannot be fully restored to their own land and established as a separate nation and kingdom, before the coming of their Messiah in glory.

4. And, that their Messiah will appear some time in the spring of the year 1843. No less than eight prophecies of time are adduced on this head; and we are invariably led from each to the same conclusion.

These are the statements which our American friends have made on this subject, and which have been laid before the public. It is much to be wished that they had spoken with a little more caution. Had they merely stated that a course of events would *probably commence* about the year 1843, which would run on for twenty or thirty years afterwards: and that during this term the Son of Man might be expected to come.—1. To raise the pious dead who shall reign in his kingdom.—2. Change and take away the living who are looking for his appearing.—3. Pour the vials of divine wrath upon corrupt churches and a guilty world.—4. And after these things, to come with all his saints in flaming fire to tread the wine-press of the wrath of God, annihilate the kingdoms of the present world, and establish his own kingdom throughout the world—they would have said no more than is believed and taught by many students of prophecy in our own country. At the same time, you must remember that many judicious men object to the manner in which the chronological prophecies are understood and expounded; and discard the commonly-assumed position, that in the prophetic writings the term day usually signifies a year. But of this I may say more afterwards, and shew you, that though the chronological prophecies are the first to engage the attention of the young student, yet they are these which occasion the most perplexity and diversity of opinion.

You request me to give you an epitome of the views of such students upon this momentous subject. I feel gratified with your obliging request; and only wish that my ability to comply with it was equal to my inclination. I will do what I can, and endeavour to compress within the compass of a letter, the substance of what I have read and learned on the subject. For more ample information, I must refer you to the authors named below.

In giving a sketch of the views of students of prophecy in our own country, I shall endeavour to show—

I. That a time of universal righteousness and happiness is predicted in the Holy Scriptures.

II. That the present dispensation is not the time for this state of universal righteousness and happiness.

III. That the present dispensation will terminate, and the millennial dispensation commence, by the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

IV. That, by the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, Israel will be converted; restored to the possession of their own land; and made the head of all the nations of the earth; which shall be blessed in them.

V. That our Lord and His glorified saints will reign over the earth; and that great spiritual and temporal benefits will be enjoyed by the inhabitants of the earth under their government.

VI. That the time for the fulfilment of the prophecies draws near, from the reckonings of chronologists and the signs of the times.

VII. The practical uses of the subject, as exhibited in Scripture.

VIII. The opinions of the ancients on this subject.

I. A TIME OF UNIVERSAL RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HAPPINESS IS PREDICTED IN THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

For nearly six thousand years the earth has been a scene of iniquity and misery. Death has reigned over the creatures, from man to the meanest insect; and the short term of existence allotted to creatures, has been associated with toil and suffering. The toil, suffering, and death, to which the creatures are subject, are the melancholy consequences of human transgression; and before the consequences of the transgression can terminate, the transgression itself must cease. It is therefore cheering to remember that an atonement for human guilt has been made by the blood of the crucified Redeemer. An agent is appointed in the person of the Holy Spirit, to appropriate the benefits of atoning mercy to the heart of the repenting and believing sinner. And though for nearly two thousand years these benefits have been offered to men, with only partial success, it is consoling to rest in the assurance of an approaching period when they will be received by all. "And men shall be blessed in him; ALL NATIONS shall call him blessed."

The following passages of Scripture establish this cheering fact:—

Jer. xxxi. 31—34. "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them saith the Lord: but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

Mal. i. 11. "For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering; for my name shall be great among the Heathen, saith the Lord of Hosts."

Isaiah xi. 9. "They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

Isaiah xl. 5. "And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

Isaiah xlv. 23. "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return; that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear."

Numbers xvi. 21. "But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord."

I make no comment upon these passages. They are so clear and decisive that it is needless. They are only a very few, out of the great multitude that might be cited. But they are satisfactory, and they make a time of universal righteousness in the earth, as infallibly certain as the divine existence. With righteousness are associated peace and joy, they will be realized together; and sorrow and mourning must then disappear.

II. THE PRESENT DISPENSATION IS NOT THE TIME FOR THIS STATE OF UNIVERSAL RIGHTEOUSNESS, PEACE, AND JOY; BUT THE DISPENSATION OF THE FULNESS OF TIMES IS THE PERIOD WHEN THESE WILL BE REALIZED.

The present dispensation is that of the times of the Gentiles. While this dispensation continues, the Jews fall by the edge of the sword, and are led captive into all nations; and Jerusalem is trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. When these times are run out, the natural branches will be grafted in. Then ALL Israel will be saved, and become the means of extending the salvation of the gospel to the ends of the earth. The following passages will shew the design to be accomplished by the preaching of the gospel to all nations during the present dispensation: perhaps they are *all* that relate to the subject.

Matt. xxiv. 14. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come."

Mark xvi. 15, 16. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel unto every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved: but he that believeth not, shall be damned."

Luke xxiv. 47, 48. "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem; and ye are witnesses of these things."

Acts i. 8. "And ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem and all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth."

Acts xv. 13—17. "And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, men and brethren hearken unto me: Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, after this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up; that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called (or, who shall be called by my name), saith the Lord, who doeth all these things."

These passages teach us, that the gospel is expressly appointed to be preached to all; and other passages teach us, with equal clearness, that it is the "will of God that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth;" that "He is not willing that any should perish, but that ALL should come to repentance." But, notwithstanding that a Saviour is provided for *all*; that the gospel is appointed to be preached to ALL; and, that the will of God is—that ALL MEN should be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth; yet the Scriptures give no reason to believe, that the gracious purposes of infinite wisdom and philanthropy will be accomplished during the present dispensation. Just as the obduracy of men *has* led them, in former dispensations, to reject the counsel of God against themselves, and to despise His offered mercy; so, we are taught to believe,—it WILL do during the present dispensation. God is, as he always was, willing to save and bless all men; but fallen man is still the same. The invitations of mercy are freely given; but some say—*we pray you have us excused*; and others entreat spitefully, and persecute the servants by whom the gracious invitations are sent. The great Apostle of the Gentiles became all things to all men, not expecting to save *all*, but that, by all means, he might save *some*. The great God will not destroy sinners without warning them of their sin and danger, and affording them the means of instruction and salvation. For this reason, the gospel is appointed to be preached for a witness unto all nations, that Jesus Christ died for the sins of men; and that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. It teaches us that the Holy Spirit, in all his grace and power, is placed at the request of them who believe; and that God has bound himself to his creatures, in this merciful engagement, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." These rich provisions and gracious offers, of divine mercy, have led many pious men to believe, that all mankind would, in the course of time, be converted by the gradual diffusion of religious knowledge, under the present dispensation. Against this supposition, however, the Scriptures oppose the following facts:—

1. The state of the world at our Lord's coming. This

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will not be a state of universal holiness, but a state of cor-
 ruption and wickedness, resembling that before the flood,
 in the days of Noah; and similar to that of Sodom, in the
 days of Lot. This is clear and undeniable, from the
 testimony of our Lord, Luke xvii, 26—30, “As it was in
 the days of Noe, so shall it also be in the days of the Son
 of Man: they did eat, they drank, they married wives,
 they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe en-
 tered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them
 all. Likewise also, as it was in the days of Lot; they did
 eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they
 builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom,
 it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed
 them all: even thus shall it be in the day when the Son
 of Man is revealed.” On the same subject, St. Paul
 teaches us, “Yourselves know perfectly, that the day of the
 Lord so cometh as a thief in the night; for when they shall
 say peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon
 them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall
 not escape.” I Thess. v. 1—3. The day of the Lord, of
 which our Lord and the Apostle here speaks, is the day
 when the pious dead shall be raised, and the living who are
 looking for their Lord’s appearing, shall be changed and
 caught into the clouds to meet him; and when the long de-
 layed judgments of God shall be inflicted upon a sinful
 world. At this solemn and awful time, men generally
 will be in a state of ease, peace, and fancied security; and as
 deeply sunk in earthly mindedness and sensuality, as men
 were in the days of Noah, and in the days of Lot. A state
 more contrary to one of universal holiness, cannot easily be
 imagined.

2. Some pious persons, however, have supposed that the
 above state of things will be in consequence of the loosing
 of Satan at the expiration of the thousand years, mentioned
 Rev. xx. 7. This is a mistake; the loosing of Satan is an
 event *subsequent* to that of which we now speak, and will
 produce a different state of things from that which is now
 contemplated. The mistake has arisen from overlooking
 other prophecies which shew the state of the world and of
 the church, from the time of our Lord’s ascension to that
 of his return. The parable of the wheat and the tares is

decisive on this point. The explanation given by our Lord is, "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world (age); and the reapers are the angels. As, therefore, the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Matt. xiii. 37—43. Now the first of these paragraphs teaches us, that at the time of our Lord's coming, men generally will be in a state of fancied security of peace and sensuality; the second teaches us, that from the time when the Son of Man sowed the good seed, to that when the righteous shall shine in their Father's kingdom, the children of the wicked one shall continue in the world. These two facts entirely preclude all possibility of a converted world during the present dispensation. In the millennial state, ALL shall know the Lord; and in EVERY place men shall offer a pure offering; but during the present age, and down to the very time of the harvest, all shall NOT know the Lord, nor offer a pure offering; the wheat and the tares shall grow together; the inhabitants of the earth will be in part righteous, and in part wicked.

3. The mystery of iniquity, was working in the days of the Apostles. This evil was not to be transient. It was to continue to work until it ripened into open idolatry, and the Man of Sin should claim religious homage. This party, who evidently signifies a person, will enforce his claims of religious homage, and persecute and seek to exterminate the saints of God, until the time arrives when the saints shall take the kingdom. The testimony of Daniel is explicit on this subject. He speaks of the same person, and says, "I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints and prevailed against them until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High, and the time came that the saints possessed the

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kingdom." This idolatrous and persecuting enemy is to be *destroyed by the brightness of our Lord's coming.* II Thess. ii. 8. The terms used by the Apostle signify personal presence and visible brightness. By collating Isaiah xi. 4; Dan. vii. 11; Rev. xix. 20, it is clear that the same person is meant or signified in each place. Now, when we consider that the evil was working in the days of the Apostles, and was to continue working until ripened into apostasy and idolatry; and that this idolatry shall include all that dwell in the earth, *whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*; we see another proof, that a state of universal righteousness, prior to our Lord's second Advent, is an impossibility. Iniquity will continue in the earth, and increase and reach its height, just at the time of our Lord's coming to establish his kingdom. Those who remain as witnesses for God in the earth, will then be subject to the greatest persecution that the history of the Church will record. Rev. xiii. 7.

4. The low state of piety among his people anticipated by our Lord at his second advent, shows the reverse of a state of universal righteousness. From Luke xvii. 20, to chap. xviii. 8, he is replying to the question, "When the kingdom of God should come?" The parable of the widow and the unjust judge, is the application of his reply to that question. He shows that men ought always to pray, and not to faint, because God, though he bears long with sinners, will avenge his own elect speedily or suddenly. But mark the startling question with which he concludes: "Nevertheless, when the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith in the earth?" This question, from the lips of Jesus Christ, teaches us that, as the Israelites in Egypt found their oppression more grievous as their deliverance drew nearer, and were almost driven to despair, so his people will be so severely tried just before his coming, and so broken in spirit in consequence of the length of the trial, that they will be almost led to the conclusion that God will not avenge their wrongs, nor grant them deliverance. In this state of despondency he expects to find his people at his second appearing. The confidence that God hears and answers prayer will be nearly extinguished. How differ-

ent from a state of prevalent piety and flourishing Christianity.

5. The Scriptures always describe the Church of Christ as the subject of affliction and reproach during the present dispensation. They teach us that while the bridegroom is absent, the children *fast and mourn*. That we must, *through much tribulation*, enter the kingdom of heaven. That all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer *persecution*. And on these grounds we are exhorted to be patient unto the coming of the Lord, as the time of his Church's triumph and deliverance from the power of Satan. This is the unvarying language of the New Testament; and it excludes all hope of righteousness becoming universal, or even generally prevalent before that event. If righteousness were universal, there would be none to persecute; the reproach of the cross would then have ceased, and men would be held in esteem in proportion to their purity and holiness of character.

6. The work of the Lord at his second coming proves that the world will be in a state of iniquity, and ripe for fiery judgments. A few passages from the multitude which might be cited will demonstrate this truth.

Psalm ii. 8, 9, "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

Psalm xlv. 3—5. "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things. Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies whereby the people fall under thee."

Isaiah xiii. 9—13. "Behold the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven, and the constellations thereof, shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud

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to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir. Therefore, I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger."

Isaiah xxiv. "Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty; and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth the inhabitants thereof. The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled; for the Lord hath spoken this word. The earth mourneth, and fadeth away; the world languisheth, and fadeth away; the haughty people of the earth do languish. The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously."

Isaiah xxvi. 20, 21. "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain."

Isaiah xxxiv. 1—4. "Come near, ye nations, to hear and hearken ye people; let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it. For the indignation of the Lord is upon ALL nations, and his fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter. Their slain shall also be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcasses, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood. And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree."

Isaiah lxvi. 15, 16. "For, behold the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render

his anger with fury, and his rebukes with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh : and the slain of the Lord shall be many."

Jer. xxv. 31—33. "A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the Lord hath a controversy with the nations, he will plead with ALL FLESH; he will give them that are wicked to the sword, saith the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth. And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth : they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground."

Zeph. iii. 8, 9. "Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey : for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger : for ALL the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy."

Zech. xii. 3—5. "And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people : all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it. In that day, saith the Lord, I will smite every horse with astonishment, and his rider with madness : and I will open my eyes upon the house of Judah and will smite every horse of the people with blindness. And the governors of Judah shall say in their hearts, there is strength to me and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem in the Lord of Hosts their God."

Zech. xiv. 12. "And this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth."

II Thess. i. 7, 8. "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."

II Thess. ii. 7, 8. "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work : only he who now letteth (hindereth) will let, until he be taken out of the way, And then shall that

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Rev. xi. 18. "And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldst destroy them that destroy the earth."

Rev. xix. 19—21. "And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he had deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh. See also Ezek. xxxviii. and xxxix., Joel iii. and Malachi iv.

Such are the judgments which the Scriptures connect with the coming of our Lord, the restoration of the Jews, and the establishment of his kingdom in the earth. An examination of the *context* of these passages will establish this truth in our minds, and show us the evils which are impending over a guilty world. Such judgments are not reserved for the *righteous*, but for the *WICKED*; and, by these judgments they will either learn righteousness, or be destroyed. In either case the predicted infliction of such judgments proves, that the world will be in a state very different from one of universal righteousness. It is especially deserving of notice that these judgments will be preceded by a general warning to a guilty world.

The Apostle John teaches us this truth clearly. Just before Babylon is destroyed, and the reign of the last Antichrist commences, the solemn and awakening call to repentance is given. The Apostle thus describes it:—"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, AND TO EVERY NATION, AND KINDRED,

AND TONGUE, AND PEOPLE, saying with a loud voice, Fear God and give glory to him ; FOR THE HOUR OF HIS JUDGMENT IS COME ; and worship him that made heaven and earth, the sea, and the fountains of water." Rev. xiv. 6, 7. Dr. A. Clarke, and some other divines, have thought, that by the numerous missionary societies, Bible societies, and kindred institutions, which are formed by Christian churches, at the present time, for the evangelization of the world, this vision is now receiving its accomplishment. It must, however, be admitted, that in *one* point the supposed fulfilment fails. The angel expressly says—" *The hour of His judgment is come.*" This awful fact is *not* generally taught by our missionaries. They, with the greater part of our Christian teachers at home, repudiate the *revealed* fact of impending judgment, and cry "*Peace and Safety.*" It is, therefore, clear that the religious instruction of the present day must undergo some change, before the vision can receive its fulfilment. You will do well to read an excellent little work on Christian missions, by the Rev. John Cox. It is sold by Nisbett, London. It sets the subject before us in a clear and scriptural light. I have seen nothing equal to it.

The whole history of the world and of the church may be thus summed up. The mystery of iniquity continues, and the wheat and the tares grow together FROM the time of our Lord and his apostles TO the moment of his second appearing, without any intermission. A state of universal righteousness during this period is out of the question, a clear contradiction in terms. Between the binding and loosing of Satan we have distinct information of a thousand years, during which righteousness and truth are triumphant ; but between the ascension of our Lord and his second advent, no reason is given why we should expect anything of the kind. Instead of the church being triumphant, it is described as the subject of sorrow, persecution, and conflict.

8. Experience might correct the expectation of a state of universal righteousness before the second advent. The progress of Christianity is slow. From the places where first its light shone, the candlestick has been removed. And where it now exists and is established, we are constrained to acknowledge that the greater part of the profession is

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false. Our missions also proceed slowly, indeed more so than we are willing to allow. This is not from the want of exertion. Never was so much instrumentality employed in promoting Christianity as at present; and yet we see no sign of the conversion of the world.

9. We have mistaken the nature of the present dispensation. It is merely that of the grafting of the wild olive into a good stock; the taking of a people from among the Gentiles. And they are called to a higher honour than that of the nations which shall be gathered to Christ at his coming. They are called to conflict with the spirit and working of Antichrist; to witness for Christ in his absence; to confess him while he is denied and rejected of men; and to earn the crown which is allotted to the conqueror through faith in the blood of the Lamb.

10. Before the present dispensation terminates, the Roman empire must revive in its imperial form. Daniel presents us with the fourth beast, exceedingly great and terrible; *then* with ten horns or kings; *after* these with the little horn, which persecutes the saints of the Most High; *afterwards* he shews us the beast again, which is taken alive and cast into the burning flame. Chap. vii. 7—14, John describes this as "The beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition." This is the imperial power that will kill the two witnesses; and to whom "shall be given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and who shall continue forty and two months." This is the party who shall make war with the saints, and overcome them; and whose power in the earth shall be universal. "And power was given him OVER ALL kindreds, and tongues, and nations; and ALL that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life, of the lamb, slain from the foundation of the world." This party will be connected with another, a subordinate agent, called the *False Prophet*, who will deceive them that dwell on the earth, by lying miracles and great wonders. This *false prophet*, we are expressly informed, shall cause, that as many as will not worship the image of the beast shall be killed. The antichristian power, here introduced to our notice, is *not* the papacy; but a power which, with the ten

kings who shall give their power and authority to him, shall hate the apostate church, make her desolate, and burn her with fire. This power, it seems, will make a covenant with the Jews, (who will be partly restored to their own land in a state of unbelief,) for a week, or seven years. In the middle of this week he will break the covenant; put down their usual services; plant, like Antiochus, the abomination of desolation in the temple itself; and demand, for himself, the worship which belongs to God alone. Now will be fulfilled, truly and literally, the prophecy of the Man of Sin. "And then shall that wicked one be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming. *Even him* whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

Three distinct agencies are to be employed in the accomplishment of this fearful prophecy.

1. The False Prophet who works miracles, and deceives them who have the mark of the beast. Rev. xiii. 11—18.
2. The three unclean spirits of devils, working miracles, *which* go forth into the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Rev. xvi. 13.
3. God himself is engaged in the matter. He shall send them strong delusion that they may believe a lie, that they all may be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. II Thess. ii. 1—12.

Such is the nature, and such the end of the present dispensation, as described in the book of God. And for this fearful end the church is making ready with dreadful rapidity. The Gentile church, like the Jewish, has proved unfaithful to her high vocation. The church has, in fact, become the apostacy, and its sin, as in former instances, shall be its judgment. Already is its judgment commenced; its power, as a church, is gone. The power of the spirit—

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the power of faith—the power of knowledge—the power of love—the power of discipline—the power of prayer itself. And yet we think to convert the world. Ah, me!—we are not only fallen but proud, and our pride has taken away the only hope of our recovery.—*Burgh's Lectures.*

III. THE ONLY HOPE OF RECOVERY IN THE CHURCH, AND DELIVERANCE TO THE WORLD, HELD OUT BY SCRIPTURES, IS BY THE COMING OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

And here let us not mistake. The coming of the Lord is the object of the Christian's hope, we know; but it is not the *ultimate* object of his hope. The millennial state is not a state of perfection. It is merely the state in which the servants of Christ will accomplish, under the immediate direction of their Lord, that which they would gladly accomplish in his absence, namely, the regeneration of the world. It is a state of putting down all rule, and authority, and power. When this is *done*, the state of consummated bliss arrives; and in the all-pervading presence of the Father, the saints shall reign with Christ, in a higher degree, as kings and priests, for ever.—Rev. xxi. xxii. But let us inquire what it is the Scriptures teach of the coming of the Lord.

Job xix. 25—26. "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God."

The term *latter days*, in Scripture, signifies the time when the Jews shall be converted, restored, and established in their own land.—Jer. xxx. 24. Also, the time when their last affliction will issue in their deliverance, from the anti-Christian beast, by the sudden appearance of their Messiah, with his glorified saints, who will then appear to destroy his foes, deliver his afflicted people, and establish his kingdom in the earth. Ezek. xxxviii. 8, xxxix; Zech. xiv. 1—19; Rev. xix. 11—19. Again, it signifies the time when the Jewish temple shall be rebuilt, and frequented by all nations, for religious worship. Isaiah ii. 2, Zech. xiv. 16—19. And lastly, it denotes the time when, after Israel's restoration and conversion, the Holy Spirit shall be poured out upon all flesh. The language of the prophet is clear and expressive. He foretells the affliction and deliverance of the Jews; and having done this, adds, "And it shall come to pass AFTER-

WARDS, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh." Joel ii. 28. Notwithstanding what took place on the day of Pentecost, the promise remains to be fulfilled. Indeed the Apostle Peter only teaches us, that what *then* took place, was of the same kind as far as it extended; but he does not say that the prediction then received its fulfilment. Acts ii. 16. Now the faith of pious Job was this:—In these days, in which Israel shall be restored, the Holy Spirit poured out upon all flesh, and the kingdom of our Lord established in the earth, his Redeemer should stand upon the earth visibly and gloriously, and that he himself should then see HIM. What pious Job here professes to believe, the prophet Zachariah clearly and pointedly predicts; thus establishing the fact, that all these things synchronize, or take place about the same time.

Psalm cii. 13—16. "Thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time is come. For the servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof. So the heathen shall fear the name of the Lord, and all the kings of the earth thy glory. When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory."

This psalm is of a prophetic character, and it expressly declares that it was written for the generation to come. It describes and laments a state of desolation. In the above verses, we have—

1. A prediction that God should interpose in behalf of Zion, now afflicted and desolate; and that the time for this interposition was fixed, and because irrevocable, is described as being come—a form of speech usual in prophecy.

2. That kind and favourable feelings in the servants of God, towards her, indicate the time of her approaching deliverance. We see some manifestation of such feelings at the present time.—See Bickersteth's Practical Guide to the Prophecies, p. 424.

3. That when this interposition takes place the heathen shall be converted to the true religion; and the knowledge of the Lord shall become universal.

4. That when Zion is thus rebuilt, and these things take place, *the Lord shall appear in His Glory*. This rebuilding of Zion is still future; and the glorious appearing of

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the Lord is connected with that event. This appearing is, therefore, *anterior* to the conversion of the heathen, and the establishment of our Lord's kingdom. Whether we understand the building up of Zion literally, or spiritually, is immaterial; the sacred text asserts, that when it takes place, **THE LORD SHALL APPEAR IN HIS GLORY.**

Isaiah xix. 1, 21—25. "The burden of Egypt. Behold the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt: and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it. * * * * And the Lord shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day, and they shall do sacrifice and oblations: yea, they shall vow a vow unto the Lord and perform it. And the Lord shall smite Egypt: he shall smite and heal it: and they shall return even to the Lord, and he shall be entreated of them and shall heal them. In that day shall there be a high way out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land; whom the Lord of Hosts shall bless, saying—Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance."

In this chapter we have a prediction of awful judgments which shall fall upon Egypt, and subject it to oppression and desolation; these judgments will be partly executed by the Jews, who shall be made a terror to the Egyptians. When these judgments are accomplished upon them, the Egyptians shall be brought to the knowledge of God, and become His true worshippers. Then Egypt on the south of Judea, and Assyria on the north, shall be united with the Jews in religious worship, and in the mutual enjoyment of the Divine approbation. They shall be the people of God. These predictions have not been fulfilled yet: they remain to be fulfilled on a future day. And we are expressly informed, that the fulfilment of these predictions of judgment and mercy shall be preceded by the *sensible presence* of the Lord, **WHO SHALL COME INTO EGYPT UPON A SWIFT CLOUD.**

Isaiah lxvi. 15, 16. "For, behold the Lord will come

with fire and with chariots, like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebukes with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh: and the slain of the Lord shall be many."

This prophecy points to a time when the Jews will be partially restored to their own land, but in a state of unbelief. They will be engaged in the building of their temple, or in conducting its services; in *casting out* their more conscientious brethren, and in boasting of their own sanctity. At this time God will interpose to deliver his faithful people, and to punish hypocrites and idolators. Then he will gather all nations to see his glory—restore the remaining outcasts of Israel—and re-establish his own worship in its purity. But when these events take place, we read,—
 "FOR, BEHOLD, THE LORD WILL COME with fire and with his chariots, like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebukes with flames of fire."—(*See the chapter.*)

Daniel vii. 13, 14. "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

In connexion with this passage, the prophet foretels the rise of the Chaldean, Persian, Greek, and Roman empires. He shews the last head of the Roman empire, as a beast taken and given to the burning flame. (Ver. 11, and Rev. xix. 20.) At this time the Son of man is seen in the clouds and is invested with the dominion of the whole world. A verse 27 he also teaches us that this kingdom will be shared by the *saints* of the Most High. "The kingdom UNDER the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an EVERLASTING KINGDOM." Here, then, the destruction of the Roman power, the making of the kingdoms of this world the kingdom of our Lord and of his saints—and THE APPEARING OF THE SON OF MAN IN THE CLOUDS, are made to synchronize, or to take place at the *same time*.

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Zech. xiv. 2, 3. “For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken and the houses rifled; * * * and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the LORD go forth and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem, on the east.” Ver. 5, “and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee” (Him).

The restoration of the Jews includes two points—a partial restoration in unbelief, which partial restoration is *now* in progress—and afterwards a complete restoration of all the tribes from every part of the earth. Between these two points, the invasion and deliverance, here mentioned, take place; this deliverance is affected by the sudden appearance of the Lord, who descends to the same spot from which he ascended to heaven. And in the bodily manner in which he left the world, he will return to it; neither does he descend alone—all his saints, previously raised and changed, come in glory with him. Now Israel will look upon him, whom they have pierced, and will mourn; their enemies will be smitten with pestilence and death; a change will take place in the earth and atmosphere, making both more congenial with human life; and the kingdom of our Lord will be established, in which Jews and Gentiles will have fellowship in religious ordinances. (See the chapter.) The premillennial COMING OF THE LORD, with his saints in glory, is here established beyond all contradiction.

In Matthew **xxii**, and Luke **xxi**, the questions proposed to our Lord, are three:—

1. When shall these things be?—the overthrow of the temple.

2. What shall be the sign of Thy coming?

3. What shall be the end of the world, (*age*)?

In answer to the first question, our Lord shows what would be the state of his disciples, and of the world, until the destruction of Jerusalem. (Luke **xxi**. 8—21.) False Christs, commotions, wars, famine, earthquakes, persecutions, &c.

Secondly—He shows what would be the condition of the

Jews, from that time until the time of the Gentiles should run out. They should fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem be trodden down of the Gentiles. (Verse 24.)

Thirdly—He shews what shall be the state of the Gentiles, as their times draw near their close. "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and waves roaring; men's hearts failing them through fear, and looking after those things which are coming upon the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. (Verse 25—27.)

Fourthly—He teaches his people "When these things BEGIN to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads for your redemption draweth nigh." (Verse 28.)

I am aware that these chapters are generally interpreted as referring chiefly to the siege of Jerusalem. The siege of this devoted city is included in the prophecy, but is by no means the principal, much less the only, subject of the prediction. Any interpretation of Scripture which involves absurdities and falsehoods, must be rejected. The following absurdities and falsehoods appear to me to be involved in the usual mode of interpretation: First, the siege of Jerusalem, with all its horrors, was not an *unparalleled* tribulation, as that in the text is expressly said to be. The tribulation connected with the siege by the Chaldeans, Lam. i., ii., iv., was equal to it; and also that connected with the siege of Rome by the Goths. In the account of the former we read, "The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children; they were their meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people;" in that of the latter we are told, "They tore one another to pieces to devour each other's flesh; and mothers did not even spare the infants at their breasts: inhumanly eating up what they brought into the world." Secondly, the coming of Titus and his troops was *previous* to the tribulation of the siege, and was the very cause of it; but the coming of the Son of man here predicted, is *after* the tribulation foretold is PAST. Thirdly, the distress here mentioned is not limited to the Jews: it is extended to the *earth* and to *nations*, and to ALL that

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mediately precedes the redemption of believers in Christ, the
kingdom of God in the earth,—and the glorious reward of
the saints. Luke xxi. 29—31; Dan. xii. 3. But the siege
of Jerusalem was followed by the dispersion of the Jews;
the fiery persecutions of the Church; and a state of war and
calamity which have continued for eighteen hundred years.
A mode of interpretation, so prolific in absurdities and
contradictions as the one under notice, must be rejected.
By this unhappy mode of interpretation, the noblest pro-
phesy of our Lord is perverted and obscured; and is rendered
comparatively useless to His suffering followers. Let us
learn to receive the words of God in their true sense and
meaning.

Such is the way in which an infallible teacher fills up the
interval between his leaving the world and his coming to it
again. One scene of varied but unbroken calamity is here
presented to our notice, and no hope of deliverance is afforded
until the Lord's return. (*See Abdiel's Essays.*)

Some pious persons have been perplexed with Matt. xxiv.
14. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in
all the world, for a witness unto all nations; and then shall
the end come." It is asked, how can the end be near, if
the greater part of the world be without the gospel? A few
passages of Scripture will show us that this prophecy has
been fulfilled.

Rom. x. 17, 18. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and
hearing by the word of God. But I say, have they not
heard? Yes, verily, their sound went into ALL THE EARTH,
and their words unto the ENDS OF THE WORLD."

Col. 1, 6. "The gospel, which is come unto you, as it is
IN ALL THE WORLD, and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth
also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace
of God in truth."

Verse 23. "If ye continue in the faith grounded and
settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel
which ye have heard, and WHICH WAS PREACHED TO
EVERY CREATURE WHICH IS UNDER HEAVEN; whereof I,
Paul, am made a minister."

These texts were written about thirty years after Christ

left the world; and they clearly teach us that the gospel was then preached in all the world. The history of the church since then is not a history of advancement, but of apostacy.

Others have been perplexed with Matt. xxiv. 34. "Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled."

The word rendered generation, in this passage, is rendered *nation*. (Phil. ii. 15.) It is, therefore, rendered by some critics, "*this race* shall not cease to be a distinct people, until all these things be fulfilled." And this undoubtedly is the proper version. *Abdiel's Essays* contain, perhaps, the best exposition of these chapters that we have in the English language. Mr. Begg's Letters also contained an exposition of them of an elaborate character; these, it is to be regretted, are out of print for the present.

Luke xix. 11, 12. "And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. He said therefore—A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to RETURN."

Judea was now a Roman province. The parties invested with the government of the provinces of that empire went to Rome to receive the dignity from the emperors. Like one of these, the Lord Jesus Christ is invested with government—the government of the world. He is gone to court, to his Father's right hand, to receive his dignity, and is *now expecting* till his enemies are made his footstool. Presently he will *return*, take actual possession of his kingdom, and then he will reward his servants and punish his enemies. THE RETURN OF CHRIST to the earth is here certainly placed before the establishment of his kingdom.

II Tim. iv. 1. "I charge thee therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom."

The apostle in this passage, like the prophet Daniel, chapter vii. 13, 14, and the prophet Zechariah, chapter xiv. 4—9, connects the appearing of Christ and the establishment of his kingdom in the earth, as events which take place at the *same time*. The one will not take place without the other; and the kingdom of Christ will not exist until he comes to set it up. This fact is so clearly and so

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easily demonstrated by a collation of the passages that it is impossible to evade it without grossly perverting or wilfully rejecting the plainest predictions of Holy Writ. It would be useless to multiply words on the subject, because nothing can add to the clearness of the statements, or to the strength of the demonstration. Only one appearing of Christ now remains as "the blessed hope" of his waiting people; and that appearing takes place at the coming of his kingdom.

Rev. xi. 15—18. "And the seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven, saying—The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces and worshipped God, saying—We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and was, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged; and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldst destroy them which destroy (or corrupt) the earth."

The first verse in this passage is frequently used as a text, when sermons are preached in behalf of missions. In this matter there is no impropriety, so far as I am able to judge, if the true meaning of the passage be given. But I have often heard it greatly perverted, and used for the purpose of proving a purely spiritual kingdom, which shall be introduced by the preaching of the Gospel, and the increased means of religious instruction. This, certainly, is *not* speaking according to the oracles of God. The whole passage connects the coming of the kingdom with the time of Divine wrath; with the time when the righteous dead shall be raised, and judged, and rewarded; and with the time when the wicked and obdurate, who corrupt the earth, shall be destroyed. The seventh trumpet is the last that we read of in Scripture; and this trumpet, which proclaims the arrival of the time of the kingdom, also breaks the slumbers of those who sleep in Jesus, and calls them to partnership with their Lord in his kingdom. We have

already seen that our Lord, according to prophecy, will not have the kingdom of the world until his second appearing; and, by the passage now under notice, we are taught that he will not establish his kingdom until after his saints are raised, and made ready to share its glory with him. The establishment of his kingdom—by the pouring out of the wrath of God, the raising and rewarding of his saints, and the destroying of the wicked, is very different from the doctrine of a spiritual kingdom by the gradual diffusion of religious knowledge. May it be our wisdom to learn what our Lord has said, and to exercise faith in his words, and not in the sayings of men.

Rev. xiv. 14. "And I looked and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle."

This passage fixes the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in the clouds, at the time when the beast will be enforcing his mark upon the inhabitants of the earth, and when the troubles of mankind will be so great, that those who die in the Lord shall be pronounced peculiarly blessed. The harvest of the earth is reaped. The pious dead are raised. The living saints, who are looking for their Lord's coming, are changed, and caught up to meet their Lord: and the marriage of the Lamb now takes place. (Rev. xix. 7.) It certainly precedes the vintage, or the judgments, which desolate the earth; and these judgments precede the establishment of our Lord's kingdom. (Zech. xiv., Rev. xix., xx.)

Rev. xvi. 15. "Behold I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."

This passage, like the former, places the coming of the Lord at the time of the great tribulation, occasioned by the pouring out of the vials of the wrath of God. While the preparations are making by the beast and his confederates, for the conflict which shall decide the sovereignty of the world, the warning note is given. As soon, therefore, as we shall see a party rise, claiming universal dominion, and prepare for universal dominion, by wars and lying miracles—and such a power *must* rise—we may rest assured that the time for the coming of the Son of Man has arrived,

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though we know not the day and hour of his appearing. Commentators generally understand by the Euphrates, in this chapter, the Turkish empire; and if this be correct, the Lord's coming takes place before that empire is annihilated. It is while the vial is draining upon it that our Lord says, "*Behold I come as a thief.*"

Now, taking these passages together, we see that when the blessings of the latter days are realized by men, their Redeemer, according to the faith of pious Job, will stand upon the earth in a visible and glorious form. That when the Lord shall build up Zion, and make it a praise in the earth, he will appear in his glory: that when Assyria, and Canaan, and Egypt are united in religious worship, he will have come in the clouds: that when the fourth beast of Daniel is cast into the burning flame, and the kingdom and dominion under the whole heaven shall be given to the saints of the Most High, the Son of Man will come with the clouds of heaven: that when the Jews, partially restored, but in unbelief, shall sigh in their last great tribulation, they shall be delivered by the sudden coming of the Lord, and all his saints with him: that when the Man of Sin is destroyed, who will sit in the temple of God, it will be by the breath of our Lord's mouth, and the brightness, visible brightness, of his coming: and, that when the seventh angel sounds his trumpet, he will proclaim the kingdom of our Lord, the wrath of God, the raising and rewarding of the saints, and the destruction of the wicked. These things, which form the great burden of prophecy, will take place nearly simultaneously; and then the truth of Scripture and the veracity of God will be gloriously and awfully demonstrated.

It has been maintained that a figurative coming of the Lord was frequently mentioned in the Scriptures, and also a spiritual coming. At one time deference to great names made me incline to the opinion. Further reflection has convinced me that it is unfounded; and that the coming of the Lord always signifies his true and personal coming. One future coming only is now the subject of prophecy; and a figurative coming is set aside by the angelic testimony, Acts i. 10, 11, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye, gazing up to heaven? this same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner, as ye have seen

him go into heaven." And a spiritual coming is set aside also by the fact, that we must falsify the Scriptures to suppose that our Lord has ever been spiritually absent from the earth. He explicitly declared to his disciples, "And lo, I am with you *ALWAY*, even to the end of the age." Now, if there be no spiritual absence, there can be no spiritual return; but there has been no such absence, and therefore can be no such return. The going away of Christ was a personal going from the earth; his return, therefore, must be of the same character.

A spiritual coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and a spiritual millennium, were not heard of in the Church until about a hundred and forty years ago. The Rev. Edward Bickersteth, whose reading on the subject is extensive, says, "I have not been able to trace it higher than Dr. Whitby, who speaks of it as a *NEW HYPOTHESIS*, at the beginning of the eighteenth century." "It was soon adopted by more Scriptural authors; as Vitringa, Edwards, Hopkins of America, Lowman, and a large body of modern divines; and so came to be the too generally received sentiment of the present day." In "A Discourse of the Millennium," framed according to this *NEW HYPOTHESIS*! Dr. Whitby says, "Scaliger was pleased to say, Calvin was wise because he did not write upon the Revelations. I confess I do it not for want of wisdom; that is because I have not sufficient reading nor judgment to discern the true intendment of the prophecies contained in that work. But yet, conceiving that I have either found out the true sense of those words (Rev. xx. 4) which usually are alleged as the foundation of the supposed millennium, or resurrection of the martyrs to reign with Christ a thousand years, or at least have said what is sufficient to show it is not necessary to understand them in a *PROPER* sense, I have comprised my sentiments of that controversy in the ensuing treatise, which I submit to the judgment of the reader."

Here we have the origin of the commonly received opinion of a spiritual millennium. It is not derived from the Scriptures; it is not even professed to be learned from God, but is avowedly a human fabrication. Let us examine for a moment the statements of its author. He was a commentator upon the New Testament, leaving out the book of

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the Revelations: and he informs us, first, that he had not wisdom, nor reading, nor judgment to discern the meaning of the prophecies in that book; secondly, that he found out that the text (Rev. xx. 4) was *not* to be taken nor understood in its PROPER sense; that is, he had found out that when God says one thing he means another, and consequently can neither be understood nor believed; for this is the inevitable conclusion to which the discovery leads: thirdly, that on these grounds he had comprised his sentiments in the "Discourse on the Millennium framed according to this NEW HYPOTHESIS." Now, with all respect for the talents and virtues of Daniel Whitby, and tenderness for the failings of one who sleeps in Jesus, must we not, as a religious duty, reject his New Hypothesis? It is, by the express avowal of its author, founded in the rejection of the proper sense of the words of God. Thus we are reduced to the alternative of either rejecting the notion of a spiritual millennium, or of rejecting the proper sense of the Holy Scriptures. I must confess to you, that to my mind, the fact of such a Hypothesis being so commonly received by professing Christians, is one of the darkest features in the aspect of the present days. And when I reflect upon the number of publications which issue from the press in support of this unscriptural and groundless theory, and see the manner in which they are lauded and puffed off in our reviews and magazines, I cannot but conclude, that the signs of the times are ominous. The religious literature of the present day has an awful tendency to lead the unsuspecting reader to reject the plain literal meaning of the word of God, and to wrest the Holy Scriptures. We may spiritualize and allegorize the Scriptures, until we make them anything or nothing, and be applauded for our pains; but if we receive the words of God in their true and native meaning, as we should receive those of any respectable human author, and give our Maker credit for speaking plain truth, in a plain and true manner, we find ourselves at variance with our fellow-Christians. The two things to guide us in our search after Scriptural truth are, first, the simple rule, "That interpretation should always be literal, except when the context forbids, or when a literal interpretation would lead to an absurdity or natural impos-

sibility;" secondly, the recollection, "That all fulfilment has been hitherto literal; and, therefore, we have to believe that it will always be so." If we interpret the prophecies of the second advent, as we are obliged to do those of the first advent, we shall find them all clear and plain.

At his first advent, our Lord was manifested at his coming into the world only to a few, who waited for the consolation of Israel, and not to the nation at large until many years after. The Scriptures teach us that this will be the manner of his second appearing. "He appears first to his waiting people. 'To them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.' 'And the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messengers of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap: and he shall sit as a refiner of gold and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.'" Hence we are taught that this first manifestation will be to his people, and the judgment and cleansing of his church will be his first work. After he has fulfilled his purpose in his church, and accomplished his judgments on Christendom, he will reveal himself to his ancient people Israel, and through them to the heathen, when every eye shall see him, and they also that pierced him; then shall the kingdoms of this world become his, and the words of Daniel vii. 27, be fulfilled. The coming of the Lord to his saints, and his coming WITH them are two different things; the former must be first accomplished before he comes with them to judgment, and, therefore, before he is manifested to the world; but how long before we know not. But this makes his coming to his church or waiting people very near, much nearer than we had imagined; and further, when he comes to his people, he will bring them that sleep in Christ with him. 'The dead in Christ shall rise first.' Then, or afterwards (for so it reads in the Greek, I Thess. iv. 17), we, which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Thus do I believe the coming of the Lord to be very near;

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and blessed are all they who *love* his appearing. May the Lord increase the number, and prepare his people for the solemn, yet joyful event.—*See Hooper on the Second Advent.*

This gradual manifestation of our Lord at his second advent, appears to be taught, Matt. xxiv., xxv. First, he judges his ministering servants, chap. xxiv. 42—51. Secondly, those of his people who will constitute the virgins, who shall follow the bride. Chap. xxv. 1—13; Psalm, xlv. 13—15. Thirdly, all those who have been endowed with any qualifications for usefulness in the church and in the world. Chap. xxv. 14—30. Fourthly, he afterwards appears in his glory, and his saints with him, and judges the heathen nations of the earth. Chap. xxv. 31—46. [Is the order necessarily consecutive? or are not these various aspects of the state of affairs when the Lord shall come?] The same view of the subject is given in the Revelations. Chap. xi. 15—18, shews us that our Lord comes to his saints, to judge and reward them, before the last antichrist is fully revealed, and the vials of wrath poured out. And that the judgment with them is over, and the marriage of the Lamb is past, before he comes with his saints to destroy the anti-christian confederacy, deliver oppressed Israel, and establish his kingdom in the earth. Rev. xix., xx. The same order is observable in Psalm i; Isaiah, lxvi. 5—24; Joel, ii. iii; Zech. xiv. In all these places we see that the process of judgment begins with God's people, or Israel, and then proceeds to the nations of the earth. We must all stand at the judgment seat of Christ; but we are explicitly taught that the saints shall not be judged with the world.

On this last point there is a difference of opinion among the students of prophecy, which should not be passed over without notice. Some suppose that the righteous will stand with the wicked, at the judgment seat, at the same time; and that all their sins, prior to their conversion from sin to holiness, and all their subsequent failings, will be brought to light before all the world. This, it is thought, is necessary, that the mercy and justice of God may be displayed in their judgment, and the equity of the judge demonstrated. In support of this opinion, it is pleaded, "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret.

thing, whether good, or whether evil." Eccles. xii. 14; Matt. xii. 36; Acts, xvii. 31; Rom. ii. 16—xiv. 10, 12; 1 Cor. v. 10, are also adduced for the same purpose. None of these passages, however, teach the opinion in question. They merely teach us that all will be judged: but they do not teach us that all will be judged together, or at the same time. It is also pleaded, that the failings of the saints have been published to the world; and the sins of David, Peter, and others made manifest to all. These things are true; but still they do not prove the point. It appears to me to be an impossibility to prove that the sins of God's people, which have been previously pardoned, will be mentioned on the day of judgment; or to shew that any of the saints, who belong to Christ, will be judged with the wicked. The following extracts deserve notice.

"If, then, the saints are to be mingled with the wicked in the judgment of the great day, the secrets of their hearts, their idle words, their evil works, and all their nameless abominations, of which, in the days of their rebellion against him, whom they now call Father, they had been guilty; nay, the corruptions and offences over which, in communion with God, they are even now mourning every day, against which they are engaged in holy conflict, and the knowledge of which it was their comfort to believe was confined to their heavenly Father and themselves; all—all must be published to their shame, in the presence of their enemies and before the world of the ungodly—a grievous punishment in itself to a sensitive and holy mind.

"Surely this is not the way of our heavenly Father with the children of his house,—of him who, as to our old sins, has said, 'Your sins and iniquities will I remember no more;' and who 'by one offering hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified;' who has taught us that 'there is now no condemnation to (judgment against) them which are in Christ Jesus;' and has put into our mouths not only that blessed challenge, 'who is he that condemneth?' but, if possible, the still more blessed one, 'who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?' 'It is God that justifieth.' And yet the theory of an universal judgment (simultaneously executed) necessarily represents the blessed justifier of his saints as bringing up their sins from 'the depths of

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the sea into which they had been cast, restoring them to the book from which they had been blotted out, and again laying them, though but for a little while, to their charge as their accuser. By those who hold this doctrine, it appears to be overlooked or unknown, that the characteristic difference between the saints and unreconciled sinners is, not that the former *shall be* forgiven, and the latter condemned hereafter; but, that the former *are* forgiven even now, 1 John ii. 12; and not merely as to their sins forgiven, but as to their persons 'accepted in the beloved,' Eph. i.—adopted children—heirs of God. Their relation towards God is entirely changed; and while they formerly like others had, as guilty creatures, to do with *God*, they now have, as reconciled children, to do with *THE FATHER*. This relationship he never after lays aside; for, as a father, he pardons their daily offences, 1 John ii. 1, and, as a father, now chastens them, not in wrath, but because he loves them, and that they should be 'partakers of his holiness.' Heb. xii. It is not, however, as the Father, but as God, that he will judge the secrets of men by Christ Jesus, Rom. ii. 13; and, therefore, if the saints appear in that judgment, they do so, *not* as children, but as sinners; their standing in Christ and grace is ostensibly set aside for a season, however short; and they become a part of that world from which grace had distinguished them; for it is the *world* that God will *then* judge."—*Reply to Dr. Urwick.*

To these forcible passages may be added a few citations from the inspired writers.

Psalm xxxii. 1. "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is COVERED."

Isaiah xliii. 25. "I, even I, am he that BLOTTETH OUT thy transgressions for mine own name's sake, and will NOT REMEMBER THY SINS."

Jer. xxxi. 34. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will REMEMBER THEIR SIN NO MORE."

Micah vii. 18, 19. "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities;

"and thou wilt CAST ALL THEIR SINS INTO THE DEPTHS OF THE SEA."

The sins of the pardoned sinner are covered, blotted out, remembered no more, mentioned no more, but cast into the depths of the sea. How then can we maintain the opinion, that they will be revealed, remembered and mentioned in judgment, without denying and rejecting these clear and express declarations of holy writ?

Again, in the parables of the talents, the pounds, the sheep and the goats, we see that the parties are dealt with as servants, and as righteous characters. Sins committed before they became servants are not mentioned, nor hinted at. They are only known as servants, and are rewarded according to their faithfulness and diligence in duty, and their benevolence and kindness towards their fellow-men. The sins of slothful servants and hardened sinners are distinctly mentioned; but not those of the parties who are then approved. The procedure of the judgment is to reveal the righteousness of the righteous, as the reason why they should be rewarded; and to make known the wickedness of the wicked, as the reason why they should be punished. Those who find redemption in the blood of Christ, the forgiveness of their sins, need, I think, be under no apprehension that the sins that are mercifully forgiven *now*, will be mentioned and revealed *THEN*.

There is another fact which supports this view of the question; that is—that the saints shall judge the world. Now to be employed as judges is one thing, and to stand at the bar as criminals is another. We have seen that the sounding of the seventh trumpet, is the time when the saints are judged and rewarded. The great anti-Christian reign is placed by the Apostle John subsequently to this. Rev. xii., xiii. The judgment of the world, represented by the parable of the sheep and goats, follows this anti-Christian reign. Then it is that the Son of man appears in his glory, and the twelve Apostles sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel; and all who have suffered for their faithful attachment to Christ, shall reign with him; have power over the nations, and judge the world.

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coming and judgment, we may proceed to consider 1, the first resurrection—2, the rapture of the living saints—3, the marriage of the Lamb—4, the judgments which shall purify a guilty world.

1. THE FIRST RESURRECTION. A few passages of Scripture will shew the truth of this doctrine.

Psalms xlix. 14, 15. "Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling." (Marg. The grave being a habitation to every one of them.)

"But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave; for he shall receive me."

In this psalm the state of the earthly man is distinguished from that of the truly pious. It is true that both are subjected to death and the grave; but the one party is *retained* under the empire of death and the grave, while the other is *delivered from it*. These facts are contained in the passage; and they are clearly and unequivocally expressed.

Isaiah xxvi. 13, 14, 19. "O Lord our God, other lords besides thee have had dominion over us; but by thee only will we make mention of thy name. They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise: therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish."

"Thy dead shall live; my deceased they shall rise (Lowth's version). Awake and sing ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."

In these verses we have again the fact of two parties subjected to the dominion of death. But of the one party it is said: *They shall NOT rise*; of the other it is said, *My deceased they SHALL arise*. One party continues subject to death after the other is delivered from it.

Ezek. xxxvii. 12, 13. "Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come forth out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves."

These words were spoken by God to cheer the captives in Babylon. The prophet had foretold the blessedness of

the Messiah's kingdom. These poor captives complained that their hope was cut off; *they* would not see that kingdom. God declared that they should see this kingdom, though they must die before its establishment. And as surely as the prophet had seen, in vision, the dry bones restored to life, so surely would the Almighty raise them out of their graves, bring them into the land of Israel, make them an united people under one king, set his own tabernacle among them, and make the heathen to know that he had sanctified them to be his own peculiar people. This resurrection was understood by the pious Jews and early Christians to be a real and bodily resurrection. And it is certainly placed prior, in order, to the establishment of the Saviour's kingdom.

Dan. xii. 2, 3. The resurrection of the *many* in this passage is connected with the overthrow of the northern king, who is the beast of chap. vii., 11, and Rev. xix. 19, with the time of great tribulation, and with the deliverance and restoration of Israel; it is, therefore, prior to the establishment of our Lord's kingdom in the earth. It must, then, be another resurrection than that which takes place at the *close* of the millennial kingdom, when all the dead, small and great, stand before God. It is different in order of time; one takes place before the millennial reign, the other at its close; the one is partial, the other universal.

Luke xx. 35, 36. "But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world (age), and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; neither can they die any more; for they are equal to angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."

Phil. iii. 11. "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."

It is allowed by judicious critics that the Greek text, in both these passages, speaks of such a resurrection as is enjoyed by a few, while the mass is left behind. Not a resurrection of the dead *generally*, but a resurrection *OUT FROM AMONGST* the dead. The same form of speech occurs Acts vi. 3.—"Look ye *OUT FROM AMONGST* you, brethren, seven men of honest report." This explains the reason

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of the apostle's solicitude to secure a part in this resurrection. Whether he did well or ill, he was certain of rising from the grave some time. He knew and taught that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. But he was anxious to be found worthy of that resurrection which is pronounced blessed and holy.—*Cunninghame.*

I Cor. xv. 23, 24. "But every man in his own order; Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power."

In this passage we have *three* different periods at which a resurrection takes place, and these at a distance from each other.

I. "*Christ the first fruits.*" At this time "many bodies of the saints which slept, arose, and came out of their graves, after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared to many." (Matt. xxvi. 52, 53.) Who these were, or to what number they amounted, we have no means of knowing. But the fact is certain that many saints arose after the resurrection of our Lord, and were seen by persons in Jerusalem. We cannot suppose that they returned to the empire of death again. Death is a curse; and it seems improbable that these, who were saints, should be twice subjected to it. It is more probable that they ascended with their Lord, and formed his retinue in that glorious state to which he was exalted.

II. "*Afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.*" The coming of the Lord Jesus is placed, in Scripture, before the establishment of his kingdom. Then his saints shall rise to glory and honour, and share the dignities and immunities of his kingdom. With them death is then swallowed up in victory.

III. "*Then cometh the end.*" The millennial reign of our Lord is the time when a sinful world shall be subjugated to Divine authority, and brought into conformity with the Divine will. When all rule and authority and power are put down, the last act of judgment takes place; the sea gives up her dead, and the dead, small and great,

stand before God and are judged out of those things which are written in the books. Death and hell are cast into the lake of fire. The earth is subjected to a second regeneration, making it an abode still more felicitous. God himself now dwells with men, and banishes all evil from among them. Christ and his saints, who have reigned a thousand years, now enter upon a more permanent state of dignity; and in the immediate presence and glory of the Father, reign over the happy and renewed earth, as kings and priests *for ever AND EVER.*

1 Thess. iv. 13—17. "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you, by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent (go before) them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, and with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then (afterwards, Gr.) we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

The coming of the Lord is spoken of in every chapter in both these two epistles. In the second epistle, chap. ii. 8, the reader is pinned down to the fact that this coming of the Lord precedes the destruction of the man of sin, and is the sole *cause* of that destruction. At this coming of the Lord to destroy his enemies, and to establish his kingdom in the earth, his saints, who have slept in him, come with him. This demonstrates the fact, that the first resurrection takes place *before* the millennium; and not only so, but also *before* the destruction of the man of sin. This makes the coming of the Lord, and the first resurrection, very near: but how near, we cannot tell. We also gather from Rev. xix. 7, that it must take place *some time* before the destruction of the man of sin, or the beast; because the marriage of the Lamb precedes that destruction. The marriage of the Lamb is certainly placed between the downfall of the apostate Church, and the destruction of the

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beast, who occasions that downfall. Probably the first resurrection and the apostate overthrow will take place about the same time, or the first resurrection may precede it.

Heb. xi. 32—35. "And what shall I say more? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae, of David, and Samuel, and of the prophets, who, through faith, subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again; and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a **BETTER RESURRECTION.**"

This better resurrection **OUT FROM AMONGST THE DEAD**, so frequently spoken of in the Scriptures, was the object for which these faithful saints suffered so many toils and dangers. They were desirous of rising to glory and honour, and, therefore, counted it of little moment to suffer in the present life. This blessed hope, denied and rejected in the present day, was the reason of their fidelity and fortitude.

Rev. xx. 4—6. "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

It is objected that John saw only the souls of them that were beheaded. The word *souls* is used more than a hundred times in the Bible, to signify the whole person. (Gen. xii. 5). *Souls* OF is also used in the same meaning Gen. xlv. 15. "The passage, however, is too explicit to be evaded; nor do I see how the resurrection of some at the

beginning of the thousand years can be denied, without involving a denial of the resurrection of *the rest*, at the end, and so a denial of all resurrection; it being evident, that whatever sense the word *LIVED* in this passage applies to the one, it also applies to the other. If those who live and reign a thousand years, live or rise spiritually, then I argue so do *the rest* who live not until the thousand years are finished; but if it be admitted of these last that they *live* by literal resurrection, then I argue so do the first; it being inconceivable, moreover, that a resurrection should be classed as *first* with reference to another totally dissimilar, and having no one feature in common."—*Burgh*.

We now see that the doctrine of the *first resurrection* is found in numerous parts of the Holy Scriptures. It glows in the songs of the Psalmist; inspires the themes of the prophets; is embodied in the discourses of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in the writings of his inspired followers; and shines forth with greater clearness and glory as we approach the close of the sacred canon. It was the object of the hope of the Jewish captives, who sighed in a strange land over the sins which had brought desolation into their own country; and which had deprived them of the inheritance, divinely allotted to their ancestors. Ezek. xxxvii.—It animated the hope of the bleeding martyrs, when the mother and her seven sons suffered the most exquisite tortures, and died for their religion.—II Mac. vii. And it animated the heart of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, to press forward to the mark, that he might obtain the prize of his high calling, namely *THE RESURRECTION OUT FROM AMONGST THE DEAD*.—Phil. iii. May we be so happy and blessed as to have a part in the *First Resurrection*.

2. After the first resurrection, which will probably be unobserved by mortals, *THE RAPTURE OF THE LIVING*, who are looking for their Lord, will take place. On this fact the Scriptures are explicit.

I Cor. xv. 51, 52. "Behold I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

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Luke xvii. 34, 36. "I tell you, in that night there shall be two in one bed; the one shall be taken and the other left. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken and the other left. Two shall be in the field; one shall be taken and the other left."

Thus, while men are employed in the occupations of life, or entranced in the slumbers of the night, the Lord will come, and without any premonition or warning, take away his waiting people, and place them beyond the reach of those evils which will desolate a guilty world.

3. The pious dead are now raised; the living are caught up to join them in the clouds, and see their common Lord; the wise and faithful servant, made ruler over his Lord's household, is now dignified; the wise virgins have entered in to the marriage, and the door is shut, and shut for ever.

(Matt. xxv. 1—13). "THEN shall the kingdom of heaven be likened to ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.")

The marriage of the Lamb now takes place. Our Lord himself places it between his coming to his people to gather them to himself in the clouds, and his coming with them to judge the nations of the earth then living.

Not a soul that has not entered previously, will be admitted to the glory to which these are admitted. The faithful servants, who have improved their talents, will be admitted to the joy of their Lord, and made joint heirs with him. The rest are left behind to learn wisdom in the great tribulation, which now sets in like a dreadful storm, and so devastates the earth, *that a man shall be more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.* This time of trouble is thus described.

Jer. xxx. 4—7. "And these are the words that the Lord spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah. For thus saith the Lord, we have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands upon his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? Alas! for that day

is great, SO THAT NONE IS LIKE IT: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it."

Dan, xii. 1. "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble SUCH AS NEVER WAS SINCE THERE WAS A NATION even to that time; and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book."

Matt. xxiv. 21, 22. "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be; and except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

Such are the tribulations of the last days, as foretold by the spirit of prophecy, in numerous places of the Holy Scriptures. Let the reader take his Bible and turn to the passages marked in number 6 of the present dispensation, page 14, and he will find awful and vivid accounts of this dreadful time. And all who are left behind in the earth, when the wise virgins go in to the marriage, will be subject to these fearful calamities, as well as to the last raging of Antichrist. It is to his rage that the Jews will be peculiarly liable, at the close of this time of trouble, when their Messiah, with all his glorified saints, shall suddenly burst upon them, discomfit and destroy their foes, and send his messengers to collect the remaining tribes from the four corners of the earth. (Joel iii., Zech. xiv., Rev. xix.) See also pages 14—19.

IV. THE CONVERSION AND ENTIRE RESTORATION OF ALL ISRAEL WILL NOW TAKE PLACE, AND THEY WILL BE PLACED AT THE HEAD OF THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH, AND BECOME A BLESSING TO ALL MANKIND. THE FOLLOWING PASSAGES SHEW THE TRUTH OF THESE STATEMENTS:—

Zech. xii. 9, 10. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication: and they shall look upon me, whom they have pierced, and mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born."

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Rom. xi. 26. "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob."

In these passages—and such might be multiplied—the deliverance of Israel from the nations brought against them, by the sudden appearance of their Messiah and his saints in glory, and their conversion, as a nation, are connected together. Their full restoration to the land of their fathers now follows.

Isaiah lxvi. 19, 20. "And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles. And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord out of ALL NATIONS, upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the Lord."

Isaiah xiv. 1, 2. For the Lord will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. And the people shall take them, and bring them to their place: and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of the Lord, for servants and handmaids: and they shall take them captives, whose captives they were: and they shall rule over their oppressors."

Jer. xxxii. 37. "Behold, I will gather them out of ALL COUNTRIES, whither I have driven them in my anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again to this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God."

Ezek. xxxvii, 21, 25—27. "Thus said the Lord God; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob

my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, they, and their children, and their children's children **FOR EVER**: and my servant David shall be their prince **FOR EVER**. Moreover, I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an **EVERLASTING COVENANT** with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and I will set my sanctuary in the midst of them **FOR EVERMORE**. My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

Isaiah lxii. 8, 9. "The Lord hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength, surely I will no more give thy corn to be meat for thine enemies; and the sons of the stranger shall not drink of thy wine, for the which thou hast laboured: But they that have gathered it shall eat it, and praise the Lord; and they that have brought it together shall drink it in the courts of my holiness."

These passages, with numbers beside, establish the fact of the restoration of all Israel and also of their permanent settlement in their own country. They will then be placed at the head of the nations of the earth.

Isaiah xi. 14. "But they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward the west: they shall spoil them of the east together: they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab, and the children of Ammon shall **OBEY THEM**."

Chap. lx. 12. "For the nation and kingdom that will not **SERVE THEE** shall perish; yea, *those* nations shall be utterly wasted."

Verse 10. "And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall **MINISTER UNTO THEE**: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee."

Chap. lxi. 4—6. "And they shall build up the old wastes—they shall raise up the former desolations—and they shall repair the waste cities—the desolations of many generations. And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vine dressers. But ye shall be named the priests of the Lord: men shall call you the ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves."

These passages are sufficient to show that the original

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design of God, to place the Jews at the head of the nations of the earth, shall yet be accomplished; then they will be made blessings to all mankind.

Zech. viii. 12, 23. "And it shall come to pass, that as ye were a curse among the heathen, O house of Judah, and house of Israel; so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing: fear not, but let your hands be strong. Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold, out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you."

Isaiah ii. 3. "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob: and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

Zech. xiv. 16. "And it shall come to pass, that every one which is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem, shall even go up from year to year to worship the king, the Lord of Hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles."

Rom. xi. 12, 15. "Now, if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness? For, if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?"

By these passages we are taught that poor despised Israel, to whom the Church is so deeply indebted, are yet to resume their station at the head of the nations, and to become the means of instruction and blessing to all the world. The restoration of Israel is followed by the establishment of our Lord's kingdom in the earth. Joel expressly teaches us that the northern army must be destroyed; that Israel must be blessed and made happy in their God: and that, **AFTERWARDS**, God will pour out his spirit upon all flesh. This is the order in the economy of Divine mercy. There will be no outpouring of the Spirit upon the Gentiles, on a large scale, until **AFTER** Israel's deliverance and restoration. The Holy Scriptures give us no reason to look for anything

of the kind. They make the conversion and restoration of Israel to depend upon the coming of our Lord Jesus with his saints in glory; and the conversion of the Gentiles, and the universal establishment of our Lord's kingdom in the earth, to depend upon the conversion and restoration of Israel, which brings us to consider the nature of the kingdom.

V. OUR LORD AND HIS GLORIFIED SAINTS WILL REIGN UPON THE EARTH: THE KINGDOMS OF THIS WORLD WILL BECOME THE KINGDOM OF OUR LORD AND HIS CHRIST.

This kingdom is the subject of numerous prophecies in the Old Testament; indeed, it is the burden of prophecy. It is also a prominent subject in the New Testament. When John the Baptist began to preach, his subject was—"Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." When Jesus Christ began his ministry, he taught, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." When he sent out the Twelve Apostles, he instructed them to say—"The kingdom of heaven is at hand." And the Gospel is denominated by its great author—"This gospel of the kingdom." After the resurrection of our Lord, he spent forty days with his disciples, speaking of the things which pertain to the kingdom of God. And the Apostles made this their constant theme, and went about preaching the kingdom of God.

This was not introduced as a new subject. Neither the Baptist nor our Lord explains the subject. It is introduced as a subject well understood, and as one for which the people were waiting. This can only be accounted for on the ground that the kingdom, which was then preached, was the same kingdom of which the people read in the Psalms and in the Prophets. We are warranted, therefore, in turning to the Old Testament writers to ascertain what they taught on this subject.

I Chron. xvii. 11-14. "And it shall come to pass when thy days be expired, that thou must go to thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build me an house, and I will establish HIS THRONE FOR EVER. I will be his father, and he shall be my son; and I will not take away my mercy from him as I took it away from

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him that was before thee; but I will settle him in my house and my kingdom **FOR EVER**; and his throne shall be established **FOR EVERMORE**."

Psalms lxxxix. 35—37. "Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall **ENDURE FOR EVER**, and his throne **AS THE SUN BEFORE ME**. It shall be established **FOR EVER AS THE MOON**, and as a faithful witness in heaven."

Isaiah ix. 6, 7. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be **NO END**, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth **EVEN FOR EVER**."

Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. "Behold, the days come," saith the Lord, "that I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in **THE EARTH**. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS**."

Zech. ix. 9, 10. "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy king cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation, lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off; and he shall speak peace to the heathen; and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth."

Luke i. 32, 33. "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob *for ever*; and of his kingdom there shall be *no end*."

Psalms ii. 6—9. "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the Lord said unto me, Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee.

Ask of me and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance ; and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron ; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

Dan. vii. 13, 14, 18, 27. " And I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him : his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. * * * But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever. * * * And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him."

Zech. xiv. 9, 16—19. " And the Lord shall be king over all the earth : in that day there shall be one Lord, and his name one. And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came up against Jerusalem, shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up, of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem, to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain ; there shall be the plague wherewith the Lord shall smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles."

Rev. xi. 15. " And the seventh angel sounded ; and there were great voices in heaven, saying " The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign FOR EVER AND EVER."

Isaiah xxiv. 23. " Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously."

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We are thus taught, that a kingdom headed by one who is the Son of David, and also the Son of God, is to be founded in the earth; and that this kingdom is to be universal and everlasting. That this kingdom, though heavenly in its origin and nature, is to be established in the earth; and the seat of its government will be the new Jerusalem, upon Mount Zion. Here our Lord and his glorified saints will dwell, in contradistinction from the nations of the earth who are saved, and who walk in the light of the city. (Rev. xxi., xxii.) The Scriptures *never* speak of our Lord or his saints reigning in heaven. He is at the Father's right hand now; but he is only *expecting* and waiting till his enemies shall be made his footstool. (Heb. x. 12, 13.) And his redeemed people sing, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on THE EARTH." Rev. v. 9, 10. No kingdom is attributed to our Lord (in the sense of the argument here used), but the kingdom of this world; no seat of his government is named, but Mount Zion and Jerusalem; in which he will reign gloriously. The earth was the scene of his humiliation; it also is destined to be the scene of his glory. Renewed and purified by the hand of God, it is destined to be a scene of felicity and glory for ever. Rev. xxi. 1—5.

But does not the apostle Peter teach us that the earth is to be annihilated at the coming of the Lord? 2 Epis. iii. 10. By no means; he teaches us nothing more than this:—The earth underwent a change, without destroying it, by water at the time of the deluge; so in like manner, it must undergo a change by fire at the time of our Lord's coming. The apostle refers to the prophet Isaiah on this subject; and the prophet teaches us, that when the earth is *utterly* broken down, and *clean dissolved*, and the inhabitants burned, and there shall be a *few men left*; that God will then punish the high ones and kings of the earth. And that, "Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously." This glorious reign of our Lord is *subsequent* to the dissolu-

tion of the earth, of which the prophet speaks. Isaiah xxiv.

Nothing is more clearly revealed in Scripture than the perpetuity of the existence of the earth; this will appear from the following passages:—

Psalm xciii. 1. "The world also is established, that it cannot be moved."

Psalm xcvi. 10. "The world also shall be established, that it shall not be moved."

Psalm civ. 5. "Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever."

Psalm lxxviii. 69. "The earth, which he hath established for ever."

Eccles. i. 4. "But the earth abideth for ever."

But though the perpetuity of the earth is a revealed truth, yet we are expressly informed, that it will not always exist in its present form; this will appear from the following passages:—

Isaiah lxxv. 17—25. "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create:—for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord."

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This passage describes the state of the earth during the thousand years, in which our Lord and his glorified saints shall reign over it, prior to the general resurrection, and the last act of judgment. At this time the empire of death will be abridged; and probably none will be subject to its power, but those who forfeit their life by transgression. The possibility of doing this is clearly stated in the sacred text. The passage contains the following particulars:—

1. Premature deaths will not take place in infants or adults. The term of life formerly allowed to the patriarchs will probably be then granted to all mankind, except in cases of transgression.

2. The curse shall be so far repealed, that men shall no longer eat in *sorrow* of the fruit of the earth, the produce of the sweat of their brows; but shall long *ENJOY* the work of their hands.

3. They shall enjoy the possession of a settled home, and a fruitful inheritance, which none shall have power to invade. They shall build and inhabit, plant and eat.

4. They shall be exempt from difficulties and troubles, and their children with them. "The voice of weeping shall be heard no more."

5. The answers to prayer will then be prompt and immediate. At present men are required to pray always and not to faint, because they may wait long before their prayers are answered. But then, the necessity for exercising patience will be felt no more. "Before they call I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." As soon as the desire of the praying heart can be expressed in words, and sometimes before, God will in mercy grant it.

6. The inferior creatures will then be brought into an ameliorated state, and divested of every savage and destructive property. "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock; and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord."

7. The earth and the atmosphere will be changed and renewed, and their relations to the other heavenly bodies will be altered. "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth." Then, "The light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be

seven-fold as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound. "Isaiah xxx. 26. Then, "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of the Lord and the excellency of our God." "For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he shall comfort all her waste places; and he shall make her wilderness like EDEN, and her desert like THE GARDEN OF THE LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody." "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign, that shall not be cut off." Isaiah xxxv. 1, 2; li. 3; lv. 13.

These beautiful passages, with many others which might be cited, teach us that the curse, pronounced upon the ground at the time of Adam's fall, will be so far removed that the earth will be restored to nearly its paradisiac state. Beauty will take the place of deformity; and fertility, and teeming abundance, will be the substitutes for barrenness and scarcity. "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt." Amos ix. 13. Then will be fulfilled the divine predictions, "They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them." Then, the redeemed of the Lord shall RETURN, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away." Isaiah xlix. 10; li. 11.

In other passages of Scripture, it is foretold, that the mode of government adopted by our Lord will be similar to that which was divinely established among the Jews.

I Kings iv. 25. "And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and fig-tree, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon."

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Micah iv. 4. "But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of Hosts hath spoken it."

In this latter passage the prophet is speaking of the *many nations* who will be the subjects of our Lord's government; and these like Judah and Israel, in the days of Solomon, shall dwell in peace and safety; and every man shall sit under his own vine and fig-tree, without any danger of molestation. The Jews had the land of Canaan divided among them into personal estates; and these were made unalienable. The prophet teaches us that the earth will be distributed among the nations in a similar manner.

Again it seems pretty distinctly intimated, that the confusion of tongues and languages will cease.

Zeph. iii. 9. "For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may *call* upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent." See also Isaiah xix. 18.

Again, as the consequence of divine government and a state of universal righteousness there will be no war nor bloodshed.

Isaiah ii. 4. "And he shall judge among the nations, and rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

A specimen of the manner of this heavenly kingdom is given by our Lord, to encourage the hopes of those who confess his name and maintain his truth, in his absence from the earth.

Luke ix. 27—35. "But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the kingdom of God. And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter, and John, and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistering. And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias; who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with

him. And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said. While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud. And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, this is my beloved Son: hear him."

The Apostle Peter expressly informs us, that, at *this time*, our Lord's prediction, that some then standing there should not taste death till they had seen the kingdom of God, *was fulfilled*. They saw a specimen of the glory in which the Son of man should afterwards appear, and also of the manner of his kingdom. Here were two distinct classes:—Our Lord, Moses, and Elias, in glory; representing those who shall reign in that kingdom in consequence of having previously suffered with Christ—And Peter, John, and James, representing the remnant of Israel, who, though still in the flesh, shall walk in the light of the city, and bring their glory and their honour into it. The words of the Apostle are clear and decisive. "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye witnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount."—II. Pet. i. 16—18.

In these passages, taken together, we see something of the happiness and glory of our Lord's millennial reign with his saints upon the earth. The empire of death will be greatly abridged; sorrow, distress, and want, will exist no more; intercourse with God will be direct, and the answers of mercy immediate; the creation will be delivered from the bondage of corruption and renewed; and peace, plenty, and settled joy shall reign in all the earth. Intercourse between men in the flesh and saints in glory will be carried on; and while the Son appears in his glory, visible symbols of the Father's presence and glory also, will be seen by the subjects of this kingdom. This last fact is taught clearly

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by the Evangelical Prophet:—"And the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence." Isaiah iv. 5.

This blessed state, the Apostle John teaches us, will continue a thousand years. Then Satan, previously bound, will be loosed for a season. He will have power to deceive the nations most remote from the seat of our Lord's government, and rouse them into rebellion. This rebellion, however, will not be permitted to succeed. It will be suddenly raised, and as suddenly quashed. Fire from God, out of heaven, will devour them; and thus proof will be given—That if the saints are the objects of Satanic malevolence, they are no longer susceptible of injury from that malevolence, nor are they required to combat with it. Their warfare will be past.

This rebellion will be followed by the general resurrection and final judgment. The Apostle John says—"And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to his works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Rev. xx. 11—15.

A final period is now put to the reign of sin and Satan in the earth; and the reason of the Divine displeasure being removed, God, who had previously reigned through his Son, for the space of a thousand years, shall come himself, and renew the earth, and raise it to a still higher degree of glory and blessedness. It is destined to be changed from glory into glory of a still higher and more perfect character. The Apostle thus describes the final state of

all things:—"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And He that sat upon the throne said—Behold, I make all things new. And He said unto me, Write, for these words are true and faithful." Rev. xxi. 1—5.

I refrain from all attempts to explain or to paraphrase this beautiful passage, or the remaining part of this book, in which the subject is continued. All attempts to do this, in my opinion, would only obscure the light which the reading of these chapters imparts to the mind, and dim the glory which is here so clearly and so strikingly revealed. The happiest attempts which I have seen to embody these predictions of heavenly felicity in human composition, are those of the late Rev. John Wesley, in his sermon on the "*New Creation*," works, vol. vi, p. 288: and the poet Cowper, in his "*Winter Walk at Noon*."

Now the Son will deliver up the kingdom to the Father, and reign in visible subordination to him, that God may be all in all; and now the saints, who shall have reigned with their Lord for a thousand years, shall enter upon an interminable career of felicity and glory, and in subordination to the Father and the Son, reign as kings and priests for EVER and EVER. I Cor. xv. 24—28; Rev. xxii. 5. Now they will enjoy the full reward of their diligence and sufferings in the cause of Christ; and be distinguished by glory and felicity from "the nations of them that are saved" who shall walk in the light of the heavenly city, but not be citizens of it. It is true that these last shall inherit a felicity which eye hath not seen nor ear heard; but to be joint heirs with Christ—to sit with him in his throne—to eat and drink at His table—to be the sharers

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of his dominion—and the heralds of his high behests of light, of purity, of love, of blessedness, to all orders of intelligent creatures, and the most distant regions of his empire, we believe to be limited to those who, having suffered with Christ, shall also reign with him, even the Church of the First-born, whose names are written in heaven.—*Cunninghame.*

The saints, who confess the Saviour of the world, and steadily maintain his testimony, and do the will of God, during the period in which the Lord Jesus Christ is absent in person from the earth, and is despised and rejected of men; shall be distinguished from the "nations of them that are saved," not only by the dominion with which they shall be invested, but also by the dwelling to which they shall be entitled. On this subject the Scriptures are explicit. We may notice a few passages.

Rev. iii. 12. "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name."

John xiv. 2, 3. "In my father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Of this place the Apostle John says,

Rev. xxi. 2. "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

Rev. xxii. 3. "The throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it: and his servants shall serve him."

These passages teach us that a heavenly dwelling, now preparing by God, will one day be brought from heaven, and placed upon the earth, to be the residence of the Father, the Son, and the glorified Saints. Here they will dwell in ineffable glory and felicity; and reign over a world then renewed, in righteousness and holiness.

We now see that *one* renewing change takes place in the

earth, at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to establish his kingdom among men, at the commencement of the Millennium; and that a *further* change takes place after the general resurrection and judgment. After the first of these changes takes place, it will be still possible for individuals and nations to sin, and to suffer in consequence of sin. The Scriptures teach these things explicitly. Isaiah lxx. 20; Zech. xiv. 17—19. But after the second of these changes takes place, there will be no more curse, pain, sorrow, nor death. Rev. xxi. 1—5: xxii. 3. The dismal consequences of transgression will now be destroyed; and all the benefits of redeeming mercy will be realized. Now, the meek shall inherit the earth. The covenant made with Abraham will be fulfilled. "For all the land which thou seest, to **THEE** will I give it, and to thy seed **FOR EVER**." During his earthly term of existence, Abraham did *not* receive the fulfilment of the promise. "And He gave him none inheritance in it, no not so much as to set his foot on; yet he promised that he would give it to **HIM** for a possession, and to his seed after him." Acts vii. 5. The promise of God cannot fail; and he assures us that what is not fulfilled now shall be fulfilled hereafter. "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and I will bring you into the **LAND OF ISRAEL**. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your **OWN LAND**; then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord." "And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers **HAVE DWELT**. And they shall dwell therein, they and their children, and their children's children **FOR EVER**." Ezek. xxxvii. 12—14, 25.

—*Abdiel's Essays*.

These are the promises to which the patriarchs had an eye, when they died in faith, and confessed themselves to be strangers and pilgrims on the earth. And by these promises we are taught the reason why the pious Jews expect a perpetuity of happiness in their own land in the renewed earth; while the suffering believer in Christ looks

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for a still higher glory with his Lord and Saviour in the heavenly Jerusalem. Israel will be rewarded as servants; but the faithful servants of Christ as sons of God, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. — Gal. iv. 1—7.

These things, taken together, teach us, That the creation is to be renewed and not destroyed. What God does, he does for ever—his work is permanent. Evil is permitted for a season to desolate the works of God, but everlasting good will be brought out of it. The creation shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, and adorned with its Creator's glory. The sun of the morning shall shine with greater splendour than ever upon the renewed earth, and gladden the eyes and hearts of its inhabitants. And the earth, delivered from the curse of barrenness, shall teem with abundance and abound with blessings, to the joy and satisfaction of mankind, and to the glory of its Maker's goodness.

VI. THAT THE TIME FOR THE FULFILMENT OF THE PROPHECIES DRAWS NEAR, FROM THE RECKONING OF CHRONOLOGISTS AND THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

It has been already stated that the chronological prophecies are the least understood, and occasion the most perplexity and diversity among the students of prophecy. This fact should teach us caution in approaching the subject; at the same time, it should not be used as a reason for negligence. We read "of the children of Issachar, that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do." I Chron. xii. 32. We also find the Jews reproved by the prophet Jeremiah for their inattention to Divine things, in the following language—"Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane, and the swallow, observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord." Jer. viii. 7. And the same people were severely rebuked by our Lord, subsequently, for the same fault. "O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?" Matt. xvi. 3. These passages teach us the propriety and necessity of keeping an eye upon the signs of the times, and also upon the chronological predictions of Holy Writ.

Of these predictions there are two classes of interpreters. The first of these adopt the year day theory, and assume as an unquestionable axiom, that in prophecy, the term day signifies a year; they also assume that the Papacy is the little horn of the prophecies of Daniel; and the Man of Sin in those of St. Paul. The second class deny the truth of these assumptions, and maintain that the term day is to be taken in its natural signification, as a day only; that the Man of Sin is a great secular and infidel monarch, who is still to arise; and that the prophecies relating to the latter days, remain to be fulfilled. I will submit the views of the parties to your judgment, and that of the reader.

[It does not seem necessary to reproduce these views: the argument is sufficient without them; and they, for the most part, take the "day for year reckoning," which our author had abandoned.]

VII. ON THE PRACTICAL USES OF THIS DOCTRINE, AS EXHIBITED IN SCRIPTURE, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO DO BETTER THAN REFER TO ABDEL'S ESSAYS ON THE SECOND ADVENT.

There you will see that it is divinely urged as the great motive to every religious duty. The following are only a few examples of the way in which these subjects are taught and used in the Scriptures.

Titus ii. 11, 13. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

Phil. iii. 20, 21. "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

Matt. xxiv. 42, 44. "Watch, therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh."

Luke xii. 35—38. "Let your loins be girded about,

and your lights burning ; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord when he will return from the wedding ; that when he cometh and knocketh they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when he cometh, shall find watching : verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he come in the second watch, or come in the third watch and find them so, blessed are those servants."

James v. 7—9. "Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and the latter rain. Be ye also patient ; establish your hearts : for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned : behold the judge standeth before the door."

Rev. iii. 11. "Behold I come quickly ; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."

Rev. xxii. 12. "And behold I come quickly ; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."

Col. iii. 1—4. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

Such is the way in which an infallible teacher, and his apostles, pressed upon the people they taught the necessity of holiness, watchfulness, patience, and fidelity. They kept the attention of their hearers and readers always fixed upon the blessed hope of the Church, the second appearing of their Lord. And while this was the case, Christians were zealous, diligent, and equally ready for service, and for martyrdom. To secure a lot in the first resurrection, and a place in the heavenly Jerusalem, they counted not life itself dear. But, let us ask, what were the views of the ancients among the pious Jews and early Christians, of this subject ? This is an important inquiry. If the doc-

trine be of God, it may be expected that his people, in all ages, have been more or less acquainted with it. And if so, it must follow, inevitably, that the theology of the present time is certainly defective, in which this doctrine is not made prominent. I see no way to avoid the consequence: either those who maintain those views are chargeable with innovation, and are guilty of perverting the Word of God, and of adding to it: or those who oppose them are chargeable with forsaking the old paths, with shunning to declare the whole counsel of God, and with rejecting the doctrine which has been held sacred by the Church in all ages. Let us try the views here recorded by this test.

[The author first adduces the testimony of the Jews, and quotes the Chaldee Paraphrase, the Babylonian Targum, the Book of Wisdom, the Paraphrast Jonathan, the Book of Tobit, the Gemarah, and the Rabbi Menasse, and adds that of the Greek Fathers by citations from Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Methodius, Paulinus; and he then says:]

Without multiplying quotations, then, we see clearly that these Christian fathers taught the doctrine of the first resurrection; the reign of our Lord and his saints on the earth for a thousand years before the general resurrection and last judgment; the rise, period, and destruction of Antichrist; and the entire renovation of the whole world. These were not held by them as matters of opinion, but as doctrines of divine revelation.

[Then comes the testimony of the Latin Fathers, Tertullian and Lactantius, whom he quotes, and adds:]

In these passages we find a state of declining piety and increasing corruption distinctly recognized as a feature of the latter days. The tyranny of the man of sin, the pre-millennial advent, the first resurrection, the New Jerusalem state, the kingdom of our Lord and the risen saints, the renewal of the earth, and the subsequent blessedness of the whole world, are also pointed out.

[He further gives the testimony of the Council of Nice, and that of the Reformers, and concludes:]

The same doctrine and views are found in the sermons and homilies of Bishop Latimer, in the writings of the

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martyr Bradford, and, in an indistinct form, in those of Tyndal, Luther, and Calvin. In the century following they were more widely entertained by the Puritans and Nonconformists, as their works, which are now extant, abundantly testify. Owing, however, to the errors of the Anabaptists, in Germany, they were brought into disrepute with many; still there were some who held them. They were embodied by the Rev. John Fletcher, Vicar of Madely, in his admirable "*Letter on the Prophecies*," and incorporated in the *Standards of Methodistical Doctrine*, by the Rev. John Wesley, in *Notes on Rev. xx. 4—6*.

Within the last twenty years the subject has had a greater share of attention than formerly. I am told that about *seven hundred* clergymen of the established church in the United Kingdom, zealously teach it in their public ministry. Among dissenters we have the names of the Rev. Robert Hall, William Thorpe, Joseph Tyso, John Cox, William Anderson, and many others, who have held and taught it. In America it is said that about *three hundred* ministers of the Gospel are employed in calling attention to this blessed hope of the Church; while on the European continent, in different places, the cry is rising, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh." You will now see that, independently of Scriptural testimony, we can trace these views among the more pious and intelligent of the Church of God, from seven hundred years before Christ to the present moment. They are therefore, no novelties. And if we turn to the testimony of Holy Scripture on these subjects, we find no means of evading their truth, except by perverting or rejecting the plain literal meaning of the words in which these testimonies are given.

It is generally found by those who commence the study of prophecy, that they have not so much to learn as to *un*-learn. Misled by interpreters, who depart from the literal and plain meaning of the sacred writers, they spiritualize and allegorize their words until a *second* revelation is made necessary, to enable them to understand and fix the meaning of the *first*. By this unhappy means the prophetic Scriptures are made of no effect, and half the Bible becomes, comparatively, useless to the Christian Church. But when the student reads the predictions of the second advent, and

believes that they will be as literally and as minutely fulfilled as those have been which foretold the birth, miracles, and death of the Lord Jesus Christ, he views the Bible as a new book. Those parts which appeared dark and unintelligible before, now appear clear, and are easily understood to a great extent. But on this subject I cannot do better than refer to the second chapter of Mr. Bickersteth's "Practical Introduction to the Prophecies." If you read and digest that chapter you will be prepared to enter upon the study of the prophecies with great advantage. I must now notice a few difficulties which you have felt.

It is objected that our Lord says, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation, neither shall they say lo, here! or lo, there! for behold, the kingdom of God is within you." The question proposed by the Pharisees was, when should the kingdom of God come? In answer, our Lord teaches them that it should not come in a concealed or doubtful manner; that they must not believe those who said, see here, or see there, for the kingdom of God is within you, or hidden among you; they were not to follow those who said, the expected Messiah is in the desert, or in the secret chambers, because as the lightning shone from one part of Heaven to the other, so visible, so public, so glorious should the Son of man be in his day. "Every eye shall see him." — See Dr. A. Clarke's *Notes in Loc., and Abdiel's Essays*.

We are also reminded of our Lord's words, "My kingdom is not of this world." This gives us no difficulty. The baptism of John was from Heaven, not the earth; yet it was practised upon the earth. Our Lord's kingdom, like that baptism, is not of the earth, but is of Divine origin, yet it will be established in the earth, and established in the earth for ever. Psalm ii. 8. Dan. vii. 14—18, 27.

We are also directed to that Divine declaration, "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Rom. xiv. 17. The Apostle is here showing that "the discrimination of meats contributes nothing to make us fit to be partakers of the kingdom of God." But righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, do make us fit to be

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See Koppe on the Kingdom of Heaven.

I have now given you a sketch of the views of your fellow Christians, who believe in the speedy coming and personal reign of our Lord Jesus Christ in the earth. In doing this I have drawn your attention to those Divine testimonies which we believe must be rejected or perverted if these views are not admitted.

Let me, then, in conclusion, urge upon you the necessity of taking heed to the *sure word of prophecy*. You will feel the want of it in the dark time of trouble which lies before us, and which already is gathering around us, and in consequence of which men's hearts are failing them for fear. That blessed word will inspire you with holy fortitude, and teach you, in your patience, to possess your soul. It will show you that, after a short tempestuous season of fiery trial to saints then living, and of judgments upon corrupt churches and a guilty world, the Saviour will appear to establish his kingdom in the world. And not only so, but it will admonish you to watch and pray always, that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man. That you, my dear friend, may be found by your Lord in peace, without spot and blameless, is the desire and prayer of your faithful friend,

OMICRON.

Passages in brackets, it will be understood, are by him who now republishes this work.

Errors of the printer require the following corrections :

Page 10—For Numbers xvi; read xiv.

" 13—For speaks read speak.

" 15—For Rev. xix and 20th; read 20th and 21st.

" 24—For the servants; read thy servants.

" 28—For tribulation foretold; read tribulation here foretold.

" 31—For was, read wast.

" 36—For jugment, read judgment.

" 27—For Psalm i, read Psalm I.

" 38—Displacement of letters.

" 48—For page 14, read page 16.

The reader is asked to observe what is said on pages 34 and 35 as to the New Hypothesis of a spiritual Millennium; and on pages 37, 38, 39, and 40, as to judgment.

Readers who desire further to inquire into these views, will find the following works useful :

EIGHT LECTURES ON PROPHECY, from short-hand notes : Partridge, Paternoster Row, London—Price 6d.

PLAIN PAPERS, on prophetic and other subjects : Partridge—Price 3s.

THE HOPES OF THE CHURCH OF GOD, in connexion with the destiny of the Jews and nations, as revealed in prophecy. By J. N. D. : Bateman, London. Price 1s.

For persons who are unable to pursue these investigations very fully, these publications contain in small compass much that is valuable. They bring out more than our present author does the distinct calling and glory of the Church, and her place and condition during the absence of the Lord.

There seems enough in the signs of the times to turn attention to these views. Some of the signs are the increase of population, even in favored lands, over the increase of evangelical agencies—licentiousness increasing in ratio greater than the increase of population—hastening to be rich—display of wealth—and conformity of Christians to the world and to its ways, to the sad neglect of the admonition: "Occupy till I come."

There is also the applause and glorification of man and his powers, and the unwonted going to and fro on the earth to the call: "Come, see the things which I have made."

Earnest preachers of the Gospel do not hesitate to point out laxity of morals, levity, worldliness, superstition and unbelief as signs and tendencies of this present time. And Missionaries are said, many of them, now to believe that the work of the world's conversion is not to be effected by the present agencies, but to be looked for as a result of the Lord's coming. Do not these facts go to confirm the truths of the preceding pages, and does it not seem that for the world's sake, as well as for the Church's sake, the prayer should be—"Come, Lord, come quickly." Meanwhile, is there not an earnest present call upon Christians to preach everywhere the gospel of the grace of God?

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